

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of scaling communication messages in a network of data processing systems, each one of the data processing systems capable of transmitting alert messages to any other one of the data processing systems, the method comprising:

transmitting an alert message, which requests a reply, from a source one of the data processing systems to a plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems, the alert message being received by the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems;

outputting the alert message by only a first subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems, the first subset being fewer than all of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems;

receiving, by the source one of the data processing systems, reply messages transmitted from at least some of the first subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems in response to a receipt of the alert message;

determining, by the source one of the data processing systems, if a predetermined number of reply messages has been received from the at least some of the first subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems;

in response to determining that the predetermined number of reply messages has not been received, retransmitting the alert message to the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems, the retransmitted alert message being received by the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems; [[and]]

outputting the retransmitted alert message by a second subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems[.];

assigning a probability to the alert message; and

determining, by each of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems, whether to output the alert message based on the probability assigned to the alert message.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 [[2]], further comprising:
assigning a second probability to the retransmission of the alert message; and

determining, by each of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems, whether to output the retransmission of the alert message based on the second probability assigned to the retransmission of the alert message.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the alert message is one of an instant message and an electronic mail message.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the alert message is one of a PollCast and a SkillTap message.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising within each recipient device:
storing the alert message in a storage device;
determining if a predetermined amount of time has elapsed since a previous determination was made about whether to output the alert message;
determining whether to output the alert message based on output criteria; and
outputting the alert message if the output criteria is satisfied.

8-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 [[2]], further comprising:
each of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems determining whether to output the alert message by generating a randomized value and comparing the randomized value to the probability.

11. (Currently amended) A system for scaling communication messages in a network of communicating peer data processing systems, each one of the data processing systems capable of transmitting alert messages to any other of the data processing systems, comprising:

a source one of the data processing systems transmitting an alert message, which requests a reply, to a plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems, the alert message being received by the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems;

only a first subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems outputting the alert message, the first subset being fewer than all of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems;

the source one of the data processing systems receiving reply messages transmitted from at least some of the first subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems in response to a receipt of the alert message;

the source one of the data processing systems determining if a predetermined number of reply messages has been received from the at least some of the first subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems;

in response to determining that the predetermined number of reply messages has not been received, the source one of the data processing systems retransmitting the alert message to the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems, the retransmitted alert message being received by the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems; [[and]]

a second subset of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems outputting the retransmitted alert message[.]; and

wherein the source one of the data processing systems server assigns a probability to the alert message, and wherein each of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems determines whether to output the alert message based on the probability assigned to the alert message.

12-13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11 [[13]], wherein the source one of the data processing systems assigns a second probability to the retransmission of the alert message; and determines whether to output the retransmission of the alert message based on the second probability assigned to the retransmission of the alert message.

15. (Previously presented) The system of claim 11, wherein the alert message is one of an instant message and an electronic mail message.

16. (Previously presented) The system of claim 11, wherein the alert message is one of a PollCast and a SkillTap message.

17. (Previously presented) The system of claim 11, wherein each recipient one of the data processing systems stores the alert message in a temporary storage, determines if a predetermined amount of time has elapsed since a previous determination was made about whether to output the alert message, determines whether to output the alert message based on output criteria, and outputs the alert message if the output criteria is satisfied.

18-19. (Canceled)

20. (Original) A method of distributing messages to a plurality of client devices in a network, comprising:

- receiving a message for broadcast to a plurality of client devices;
- assigning a probability value to the message;
- transmitting the message to the plurality of client devices;
- at each client device, generating a randomized value;
- comparing the randomized value of a client device to the probability value of the message; and
- outputting the message based on the comparison of randomized value and the probability value.

21. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 [[2]], further comprising the probability being determined using a random number generator.

22. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 [[2]], further comprising the probability being based on a total number of the plurality of recipient ones of the data processing systems.

23. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 [[2]], further comprising increasing the probability when the alert message is retransmitted.